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Fall 2003

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Indigenous Arts of the American West



Forest Warriors

Historically, Native American tribes used fire as a tool to manage forest growth and prevent large forest fires. Over the past seven decades, firefighting has become a fixture of life on many reservations in the western United States. Many tribes have their own fire brigades made up of local men and

women who carry on a family tradition. Robert Struckman examines the role of fire in American Indian cultures today. Garrett Cheen photographs firefighters on the Flathead Indian Reservation in western Montana.



Woven Histories

Trade blankets have been ubiquitous in the lives of Native Americans for more than 300 years. First introduced by European traders in the 17th century, these wool blankets continue to be used by American Indian nations for ceremonial and practical uses. Martha Davidson explores the func-

tion, beauty, and history of trade blankets. She also writes about the launch of the first National Museum of the American Indian blanket made by Pendleton Woolen Mills.



Crumbling Beauty

Situated on an island in southwest Alaska, the Kake Cannery sits as a reminder of decades past. Once a thriving hub of tribal enterprise for the community's Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people, the site is now a National Historic Landmark. Writer Joanna Markell and

photographer Brian Wallace travel to the village of Kake and meet the people whose memories of the cannery fuel plans for its renovation and prosperity.



Native Places: Warm Springs

At the foot of Mount Hood in Oregon, the Museum at Warm Springs represents the shared histories of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. For nearly 150 years, the Paiute, the Wasco, and the Warm Springs people have shared the high desert flank of the snow capped mountain. Today, the museum houses artifacts purchased or donated by local tribal members. Kara Briggs (Yakama) travels to northern Oregon to experience the museum.

On the cover: Detail from Sauninga by Truman Lowe – a blanket produced by the National Museum of the American Indian in cooperation with Pendleton Woolen Mills to commemorate the opening of the NMAI's Museum on the National Mall. Photo by Renée Comet.

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Celebrating Native Traditions & Communities

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L-R: NMAI Curator Ramiro Matos (Quechua) with consultants Nazario Turpo Condori (Quechua), and Arvol Looking Horse (Lakota) praying with NMAI staff at NMAI Cultural Resources Center.

Respect and Best Intention Responsible handling of the NMAI's enormous collection of objects is sometimes a matter of prayer

By Scott Merritt

useum professionals and other visitors often show interest in the technical aspects of the National Museum of the American Indian's (NMAI) five-year collections move. They ask many questions of staff and are most surprised when told the greatest challenge involves issues of cultural sensitivity. We like to use the term "with respect and best intention" to describe how we manage these issues.

So far, 679,000 of more than 800,000 objects have moved from the Bronx to the Cultural Resources Center, 250 miles away in Maryland. Two types of consultations help ensure that the collections are handled in a respectful manner. First, spiritual leaders are invited to speak with staff. The visits often include a potluck and the guests' prayers. Many of the staff find comfort in the spiritual leaders' prayers and explanations of how to care for the objects and themselves. This new knowledge helps them understand and feel more comfortable when providing care for potentially culturally sensitive material.

Secondly, tribal members provide direction

on special handling or "traditional care" of the objects, the term "traditional care" being problematic since there is little "traditional" about a museum setting or its staff. Most agree, however, that medicine bags should be handled by staff of a specific gender, since before coming into the collection, they were cared for by a person or society whose beliefs held that objects be used or cared for by a specific gender.

Upon starting the Plains Vault, NMAI curators George Horse Capture (Gros Ventre) and Emil Her Many Horses (Oglala Sioux) spent a week identifying what should be handled specially and how. These two men – representing two different Plains tribes – provided a general direction for the staff on what to do with all the tribes' objects in this vault. Since a true level of sensitivity for every object could never be known, the direction provided by Horse Capture and Her Many Horses was to treat all objects with the same amount of respect and best intention. They also asked that medicine bundles and a few other objects be handled by staff of a specific gender.

Visiting spiritual leaders and elders also help staff understand how to prepare themselves personally to handle or just be around some of the more powerful objects. Since many of these were used in ceremony, the power associated with the ceremony or healing may or may not be alive, or the associated power may be awakened after many years of dormancy.

This idea of power associated with objects is illustrated by a visit from Arvol Looking Horse (Mnikoju Lakota), the 19th-generation keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe of the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota Sioux Nations. After a potluck, he said prayers for staff who gathered in a circle to smoke his pipe. Looking Horse emphasized the importance of the staff's work and explained that his prayers were to help staff and their families understand or at least deal with the energy or spirit that may be encountered working around these objects. These powers are not inherently bad, but some can be so powerful as to inadvertently cause problems for an unsuspecting handler or bystander.

Others, like Isaac and Elizabeth Roberts (Meskwa-Kia) spoke about how to work with culturally sensitive objects in a well-intentioned manner. They emphasized that although the staff may not be able to identify objects that are spiritually significant, they can treat all objects with respect and go about their work with positive thoughts and attitudes.

Esteban Pop Caal, a Mayan priest from Guatemala, recently prepared the Middle American objects by asking the spirits' permission to move them. He accomplished this by feeding the spirits and cleansing the building in a two-day ceremony that included burning large quantities of resin and vegetal incenses in a charcoal fire. Also important to his ceremony was the cleansing and preparation of the staff who will be handling these objects. His blessing will make the staff familiar to the spirits.

Pop's direction for special handling was similar to that of past consultants. Except for a few select pieces, there are no restrictions in our handling of the objects, but "intent" of our actions should always reflect respect and care.

Nazario Turpo Condori (Quechua), a shaman from Phaquchanta, Peru, will be coming to work with staff and prepare the South American collection for relocation this coming fall.

These complex issues present a challenge, but the crew of 54 NMAI staff members, driven by respect, creativity, or professional ethics, thrive on what may be described as "best intention."

Scott Merritt is the site manager and move coordinator at the NMAI Research Branch in the Bronx, N.Y.



Production shot from Los Pueblos Indigenas: Asi Pensamos (Indigenous Peoples: This is How We Think) produced by CEFREC (Center for Audiovisual Training and Production in Bolivia). Marcelina Cardenas (in black skirt) works the lighting.

NMAI Film & Video Center Serves up the Best in Native Film, Video, & Radio

Then I was reviewing the submissions, I looked for a compelling story and a message," says Mary Sando-Emhoolah (Warm Springs Wasco/Aluet), one of four selectors for the upcoming Native American Film and Video Festival. "A story that is meaningful to viewers and has the power to move or change them." Now in its 12th incarnation, the National Museum of the American Indian's Film and Video Center gears up for another helping of the best in Native film, video, and radio programs from North, Central, and South America. Between December 4 and 7, 2003, the George Gustav Heye Center in New York City will showcase productions by Native media makers, community projects, and works reflecting Native perspectives.

"The film festival represents a broad sweep of Native involvement in film and video," says Elizabeth Weatherford, FVC head. The works range from independent cinema to community-produced projects. Weatherford says that there has been an increase in works in indigenous languages by Native communities throughout the hemisphere. "The festival has an international scope and features a range of genres and production sources," she says. Films and videos from seven countries will be shown, including Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, El Salvador, the United States, and Canada.

Sando-Emhoolah is joined by Paul Rickard (Omuskego Cree), Marcelina Cárdenas Sausa (Quechua), and Randy Redroad (Cherokee), who are collectively responsible for choosing the final selections for the festival. All selectors are actively involved in Native media making throughout the hemisphere. Sando-Emhoolah continues to work in public radio as she has done for 18 years in Oregon; Montreal-based Rickard produces, directs, and works as a cameraman; Bolivian Cárdenas Sausa works with Coordinadora Audiovisual Indígena Originaria de Bolivia (CAIB); and American director Redroad's film *The Doe Boy* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival.

The festival features more than the best in film and video, Weatherford states. A digital section devoted to Web-based projects and CD-ROMs has become a regular component of the festival, as have workshops and special events. "The Native Networks workshops provide an excellent venue to bring Native media makers from across the Americas Weatherford says. together," "There they can meet and discuss common issues and concerns about Native media."

The last festival was held in 2000 and featured works from Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, the continental United States, and Hawaii. Since 1979, the FVC has showcased approximately 1,200 new works through its festival and various public programs. Each festival presents approximately 70 works from all the Native media fields, with Native Networks panels and symposium discussions on new developments and issues.

Organized by the Film and Video Center of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, the festival will be presented in New York City at the George Gustav Heye Center and other venues to be determined. All programs are free to the public. Please visit the festival's Web site www.nativenetworks.si.edu for more information and for a complete list of the works to be shown at the 2003 festival. – Jason Ryle

Video Native Mexico Tour Showcases Hemispheric Nature of Native Cultures

66 Tt has been an exhilarating and intense journey for us all, and it will be part of my heart for a long time," says Elizabeth Weatherford, head of the National Museum of the American Indian's Film and Video Center (FVC). She refers to the Video Mexíco Indígena/Video Native Mexico tour that visited five states and the nation's capital between April 3 and 16, 2003. Screening award-winning indigenous videos from Native production organizations in Mexico, the tour touched down at universities, museums, film festivals, and Native American and Latino cultural centers.

The FVC organized the tour as part of the NMAI's mission to provide the public with complex views of the diversity of Native peoples throughout the Americas and to support the work of Native artists and filmmakers. "The tour has been amazing," Weatherford says. "Its success is measured in two ways: the genuine interest and enthusiasm of the audiences and the participants and, like a stone in a pond, the sense from comments that the impact of these exchanges will continue for years to come."

Native Mexican production organizations Oio de Agua Comunicación, EXE Comunicación, and the Centros de Video Indígena provided films by such filmmakers as Dante Cerano Bautista (P'urepecha) from Michoacán and Juan José García (Zapotec) and Fabiola Gervacio Cándido (Mixe) from Oaxaca. were Screenings held in Washington, D.C., New York, Wisconsin, Illinois, New Mexico, and California.

This tour formed part of an exchange that included a 1998 trip by Native American filmmakers from the United States, organized by the NMAI, that screened in 15 Native communities and cities in southern Mexico. The tour will continue as a feature on the NMAI's Native



VMI in Taos, New Mexico. L-R: Dante Cerano (P'urehepecha), Fabiola Gervasio (Mixe), Guillermo Monteforte, Sergio Julián (Mixtec), and Juan José García (Zapotec).

Networks Web site, to be developed with the participating videomakers from Native communities in Oaxaca and Michoacán. This bilingual Web site was launched in 2000-2001 with support of the Ford Foundation.

The 2003 Video México Indígena tour has been made possible with support from the Ford Foundation and the Latino Initiatives Fund, administered by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives. "Our hosts' kindnesses and interest and the hard work of the organizers and sponsors all have been amazing and leave me refreshed in the Film and Video Center's mission and purpose," says Weatherford.

For more information on the tour and the Film and Video Center, please visit www.nativenetworks.si.edu.

– Jason Ryle

American Indian Staff, Contributors Honored

66 was honored and pleased to be in such good company," says Nance Ackerman (Mohawk). Ackerman was one of three Native writers honored for their work in *American Indian* magazine by the Native American Journalists Association at their annual media awards in Green Bay, Wis. For the second straight year, *American Indian* was awarded first place for general excellence for a publication released two to six times a year.

Along with Ackerman, Richard Peterson (Dakota/Assiniboine) and Jason Ryle (Anishinabe) won first place for best feature writing for their collaborative piece "Gifts from the Earth" published in the Spring 2003 issue of the National Museum of the American Indian's magazine. "I enjoyed meeting Joyce Growing Thunder and was pleased to write about her life and work," Peterson says. "I'm grateful to be acknowledged for representing her art to the NMAI readership. As a beader myself and a member of the same tribe, I learned a lot from Joyce and am still amazed by her work."

"I was thrilled," Jason Ryle says. "To be recognized for the first time by my peers is very special." A frequent contributor to *American Indian*, Ryle was also awarded an honorable mention for his feature article, "TV of a Different Color," which profiled the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network and appeared in the Spring 2003 issue.

David Beyer (Cree) picked up second prize for best magazine layout and design for the third consecutive year. "The most gratifying thing about these awards is seeing all the different publications from around the continent being recognized," he says. "It demonstrates that there's a wealth of talented Native people out there doing great work."

"Receiving these awards from our peers at the Native American Journalists Association is a great honor for the museum, our magazine staff, and our contributors," says Elizabeth Duggal, publisher of American Indian and the director of the museum's Office of External Affairs and Development. "We strive through the magazine's articles to keep our NMAI members informed and inspired with our focus on Native communities and their traditions." NAJA bestows media awards for excellence in writing, layout and design, general excellence, and photography.

NMAI Hosts Venice Biennale Reception

s part of its ongoing mission to promote and encourage contemporary Native arts, the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) sponsored a reception in collaboration with the Indigenous Arts Action Alliance (IA3) at the 50th International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale in Venice, Italy on June 12. Established in 1893, the Biennale's theme this year's was Dreams and Conflicts the Viewer's Dictatorship, which presented 380 artists' works that represent the state of contemporary art globally. "We are delighted to have this opportunity to talk about the exciting and rapidly expanding renaissance of American Indian art and cultures and to announce to the international art community the grand opening of the new museum," says Rick West (Southern Cheyenne), NMAI's director. "The museum is honored to collaborate with the Indigenous Arts Action Alliance and to support exhibiting artists such as filmmaker Shelley Niro and poet Sherwin Bitsui."

IA3 organized the first U.S. representation of American Indians at the 1999 Biennale. This year, IA3 chose Shelley Niro and Sherwin Bitsui as its Biennale representatives. At the opening reception, Niro (Mohawk) showcased a five-minute film, *Pellerossasogna* – *The Shirt*. Bitsui (Navajo), IA3 chair, read works from his first book of poetry, *Shapeshift*, which will be published by the University of Arizona Press this September.

West's presentation to an international audience of scholars, collectors, and artists included plans for the September 21, 2004 grand opening of the mall museum and the museum's goals for showcasing contemporary Native American art in both New York City and Washington, D.C. "The



Biennale provides the NMAI and all Native Americans a global audience to teach the world that Native peoples and artists are not cultural relics but are part of a community whose cultures are vibrant and alive," says West. – Patsy Phillips Above: Poet Sherwin Bitsui (Navajo) and filmmaker Shelly Niro (Mohawk) at the NMAI Biennale reception.

NMAI/IAIA Alliance Dedicated to Excellence in Education & Preservation

nder the New Mexican desert sky, Native scholars from around the world gathered for the common goal of furthering learning. As part of a partnership with the National Museum of the American Indian and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the Institute of American Indian Arts hosted the Convocation of Native and Indigenous Scholars from May 18 to 20, 2003, in Sante Fe. The purpose of the conference was to chart an agenda for IAIA's planned Lifelong Learning Center; the scholars advised the LLC planning team on model programs, best practices, and learning needs.

IAIA President Della Warrior (Otoe-Missouria) says the LLC will "create a place for learning that presents the creativity, insight, vision, and innovation of Native and indigenous peoples" from their own perspective.

Among those attending the meeting were Pulitzer Prize-winning author N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa); Janine Pease-Pretty On Top (Crow), founder and former president of Little Big Horn College; and Rayna Green (Cherokee), director of the American Indian Program at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

The conference was part of a cooperative framework signed

between NMAI Director Rick West (Southern Cheyenne) and Warrior in December 2002 to further the collective missions of both organizations to nurture, preserve, and protect the cultures, resources, and languages of Native peoples. The framework seeks to conduct programs and activities that will enhance the capability of American Indians to attain educational excellence while preserving and promoting individual tribal cultures, languages, and resources.

Another conference, planned for 2004, will focus on defining the history of Native arts from an indigenous perspective.

NMAI Books - a Gift Fit for a President







or 25 minutes deep in the French Alps, two world leaders met in early June for the first time since war drew them apart. During the G-8 summit in Evian, President George W. Bush gave French President Jacques Chirac an official gift that was both personal and significant. Shortly after the second Gulf War - when American and French interests were at odds - President Bush diverged from usual protocol by personally presenting to President Chirac three leather-bound books by the National Museum of the American Indian as a token of goodwill. Official gifts are normally not given to state leaders directly but rather through personal aides.

Native American art and cultures have been of long-standing interest to the French president. In 1992, when many of the world's nations, including the United States, commemorated the 500 years since Christopher Columbus's voyage to the Western Hemisphere, President Chirac banned any formal French national celebration on the grounds that they might "disparage indigenous peoples."

Knowing of President Chirac's interest, the State Department's Office of the Chief of Protocol had contacted Terence Winch, NMAI's head of publications. "The phone rang one day in mid-May, and it was from the State Department looking for a suitable book for the official gift," Winch says. He suggested three NMAI titles that reflect the wealth and diversity of museum's collections: the Creation's Journey: Native American Identity and Belief; All Roads Are Good: Native Voices on Life and Culture; and Spirit Capture: Photographs from the National Museum of the American Indian.

Winch says he chose these titles for their combination of aesthetics and valuable information. *"Creation's Journey* provides great insight into the museum and approximately 300 of its masterworks; *All Roads Are Good* reflects a quintessential NMAI project that features Native American first-person narratives about objects in the museum; and *Spirit Capture* is the only book showcasing the NMAI's extensive photo collection." He then forwarded the books to the State Department, compliments of NMAI Director Rick West (Southern Cheyenne), which then delivered them to President Bush.

Catherine Colonna, President Chirac's spokesperson, said the books "had hit the spot" with the French president. "He was particularly touched by the gesture," she says.

Creation's Journey: Native American Identity and Belief and All Roads Are Good: Native Voices on Life and Culture are available in hard or soft cover. Spirit Capture: Photographs from the National Museum of the American Indian is available in cloth or paper cover. All three titles were published by Smithsonian Institution Press. Please visit www.nmai.si.edu for more information or to buy. NMAI charter members receive a discount on all purchases. – Jason Ryle

Scholastic Partnership Puts NMAI in Schools

The National Museum of the American Indian enters the L nation's classrooms this fall through a partnership with Scholastic, the largest publisher of educational books and materials. Scholastic and NMAI Public Programs will team with Scholastic InSchool Solutions to launch a nationwide educational outreach initiative for the museum. "Working with Scholastic gives the NMAI a chance to reach both the museum's visiting schoolchildren and teachers, as well as the children and teachers in America's classrooms," says Helen Maynor Scheirbeck (Lumbee), NMAI assistant director for Public Programs.

Created for students in grades four through eight, the first wave of the program is titled A Native Place: The National Museum of the American Indian Rises on the National Mall. An eight-page teaching guide, this program meets national education standards and features lessons that allow for broad, flexible classroom use. "The first educational resource materials in our partnership will focus on the Native design elements of the National Museum of the American Indian, including the symbols and special areas of the building and how they are reflective of Native spirituality, values, and traditions," Scheirbeck says.

The program initiates the NMAI's educational initiatives to public, private, and tribal school systems. *A Native Place* will first be distributed to more than 26,000 educators at schools in the Washington, D.C., metro area, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools nationwide, and schools across the country with American Indian populations of 10 percent or higher.

"By fall 2003, many of America's schoolchildren will begin an exciting cultural journey on a learning path created to foster appreciation of Indian cultures, their philosophies and histories – past and present – and their progress and challenges," Scheirbeck says.

For more information on this program, please contact the NMAI's Public Programs department at (202) 287-2020.



Salish firefighter Mervyn Camel, 22 from Ronan, Mont. sets flames to mistletoe and dead underbrush with his gasoline/diesel-filled drip torch on a Mission Valley Fire Crew prescribed burn.



Several veteran and rookie Montana firefighters await the start of the pack test on Pablo Dam in Pablo, Mont. To qualify, each participant must carry a 45-pound pack for three miles and under 45 minutes.

Forest Warriors

Over the past seven decades, fire fighting has become a tradition, a fixture of life on many reservations in the West. Although less than one-half of one percent of the population of the United States, American Indians account for one in five wildland firefighters.

steady west wind blows across the surface of Pablo Reservoir on the Flathead Indian Reservation in western Montana. The wind buffets a group of about 20 men and women waiting on a Thursday morning to take the fitness test to fight wildfires this summer. The group talks and jokes, shifting from foot to foot on the gravel road atop the reservoir's earthen dam. Most have donned weighted vests for the arduous pack test for work such as digging fire lines and setting back burns. It's a three-mile timed hike with a 45-pound pack.

Story by Robert Struckman · Photos by Garrett Cheen

Everyone gathers around the bed of a pickup truck where Doran DuMont, a tribal Fire Management employee, stands and explains the instructions for the test, his voice loud to be heard over the wind, "Three miles in 45 minutes." A moment later, the hikers hustle away, stringing out into a line like runners in a race.

DuMont (Confederated Salish and Kootenai) remains behind with Jan Gardipe (Confederated Salish and Kootenai), who keeps time on a stopwatch. Soon the first two walkers – a mother-daughter pair taking the



Salish and Kootenai Division of Fire crew boss, Doran Dumont distributes a 45-pound pack to an excited Chelsey Johnson before the mandatory pack test on Pablo Dam in Pablo, Mont.



Above: Jeff Wall and other Montana Indian firefighters at the one-mile marker during a required annual pack test, May 2003.

Facing page, top: After a 14-acre prescribed burn, Mission Valley Fire Crew Foreman and 21-year veteran Basil Tanner revels in fire success as Salish firefighter Devlyn Lafrombois, Salish fire specialist Curtis Matt, and Randy Finley rest. light fitness test necessary to work in the tent cities that spring up around major blazes – round the corner and come into view at the end of the dam. Gardipe shouts out to them, "You got it, girls. Keep it up."

A few moments later, Jennifer Morigeau (Confederated Salish and Kootenai) and her mother Vicky (Confederated Salish and Kootenai) arrive at the pickup, red-faced and sweating. DuMont tries to tease them: "Oops. I forgot to start the clock. You'll have to do it again." Vicky doesn't smile; she scowls and stretches. "Just kidding," DuMont says, "You've got it."

Back at the main building in the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Fire Management complex near Ronan, Mont., Tony Harwood (Blackfeet) addresses a conference room of firefighters who have already passed the pack test. Next week the empty seats in the room will likely hold most of those at Pablo Reservoir. Harwood lists upcoming training sessions and talks about the fire forecast for the summer. Drought conditions continue across most of the West. Forests are tinder dry. Spring rains and cool weather have delayed the onset of the fire season in some states, like Montana, but "don't think our wet spring means there won't be fires here," Harwood says. "All that green grass will turn brown in July, and that means more fuel." The firefighters, solemn as soldiers, nod.

The structure of the national fire fighting effort is like that of the military. When small blazes grow out of control, a call goes into the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho. The biggest and hottest fires prompt requests for fire crews from offices like this one. Within minutes, phones across this reservation will ring, calling in the men and women who passed the fitness test and took the training. Buses will ferry the crews to an airport in nearby Missoula, where airplanes will deliver them to Utah or New Mexico or Florida, anywhere they are needed.

Over the past seven decades, fire fighting has become a tradition, a fixture of life on many reservations in the West. Although less than one-half of 1 percent of the population of the United States, American Indians account for one in five wildland firefighters. "For one thing, fire means money, and a lot of Indians love to be in the outdoors. I know I did," says Steve Clairmont (Confederated Salish and Kootenai), a retired smokejumper who parachuted to backcountry blazes. He spent his early years working fires on the reservation. "There's that physical competition. And you're out there with your family, your tribe." Federal dollars to fight wildfires first came to Indian Country in the 1930s with the Civilian Conservation Corps, a work program with the primary mission of building roads, dams, and trails and suppressing fires. Clairmont's late father, Sam Clairmont (Confederated Salish and Kootenai), found work with the Three Cs, as the corps was called, and led crews to douse lightning strikes. The elder Clairmont became a legendary figure on the southern end of the reservation, teaching scores of young men the art of the shovel and the pulaski, a double-headed tool with an ax on the front and an adz-shaped hoe on the back.

In 1959 the Mescalero Apache in New Mexico sent the first all-Indian fire crews to battle an off-reservation fire in the Lincoln National Forest. The Mescalero Red Hats, named for their distinctive helmets, dug in near Capitan Gap, where a singed bear cub, later named Smokey the Bear, was found. The bear – and the phrase, "Only you can prevent forest fires" – represents for generations of Americans the danger and devastation of fire. Led by the Red Hats, a tradition of national service sprang up on every reservation throughout the western United States, from Washington to New Mexico and as far east as Oklahoma.

Every year, says Jim Stires, the director of the fire management branch of the Bureau of Indian Affairs at NIFC in Boise, all-Indian crews are in demand for the hardest fires. "As a rule, Indian crews respond very fast. They are more experienced, better trained." The most sought-after fire crews are the Type I crews, known as Hotshots: elite, highly trained units, whose name refers to the hottest, most dangerous, and most difficult parts of a fire.

There are no specific requirements to join the 20-member Hotshot crews. "Fire fighting is basically grunt work, physical work. Type Ones go anywhere. They pound the trails. They carry shovels and chain saws. They dig in and fight and sleep on the ground," says Janelle Smith, a spokesperson at NIFC.

Five all-Indian crews have the elite status, including the Zuni Interagency Hotshots from Zuni Pueblo in New Mexico and the Mescalero Red Hats. To gain Type I status, a crew must meet a number of stringent standards for two trial years. For instance, the crew must train together daily during fire season and be able to dispatch in less than one hour. Five additional all-Indian crews are on the Hotshot path but have not yet completed the two trial years.

Lyle St. Goddard (Blackfeet), the supervisor of the Chief Mountain Hotshots on the





All-Indian crews have been dispatched in times of national emergencies, in a method similar to the National Guard. Stires says nearly half of the crews who searched for remnants of the Space Shuttle Columbia hailed from reservations.

Blackfeet Reservation near Glacier National Park in Montana, says, "At the fires, people started calling us the warriors of the forest. You look at our name, Chief Mountain. It brings you a lot of pride. It's a great honor to be on a Type I."

Yet all-Indian Hotshot crews are a relatively small factor in the overall world of Indian fire fighting. Of the roughly 6,000 Indians who enlist every summer, only about 100 are Hot Shots. It's the standard crews – like the ones that take the pack test every other Thursday at Pablo Reservoir – that have become the backbone of the nation's wildland firefighters, Stires says.

In recent years, Indian fire crews have begun to respond to more than just forest and range fires. All-Indian crews have been dispatched in times of national emergencies, in a method similar to the National Guard. Stires says nearly half of the crews who searched for remnants of the Space Shuttle Columbia hailed from reservations. Two crews of 20 from Flathead were dispatched on repeated 21-day stints in Texas for the shuttle cleanup. In addition, at least one all-Indian Hotshot crew responded to New York City after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The Zuni Interagency Hotshots managed a supply warehouse from September 22 to October 8.

For the length of the stay in New York, every morning and evening the crew marched single file between the warehouse and their hotel. "We always do on fire assignments. In the morning it was foggy. A lot of people were curious, wondering who we were and what we were, with our T-shirts with the Zuni Knife Wing on them," says Valdis Neha (Zuni), a member of the crew that went to New York City.

The Zuni Knife Wing is a symbol of renewal through fire, something like the phoenix. The symbol adorned the shields of warriors in times gone by and appears as part of the Hotshot uniform, even appearing on crew vehicles. One of the crew members, Octavius Chuyate (Zuni), spent his spare time on a drawing of the Zuni Knife Wing with the Twin Towers in the background. As they prepared to return home, the crew presented the framed drawing to the city. On the back of the frame is an explanation of the symbol and the words, "May this symbol protect our nation and its people. God bless America." **Of the roughly** 6,000 Indians who enlist every summer, only about 100 are Hot Shots. It's the standard crews – like the ones that take the pack test every other Thursday at Pablo Reservoir – that have become the backbone of the nation's wildland firefighters.



The roles of the fire crews have changed in other ways, too. In the mid-1990s, federal fire policy shifted. Researchers and policy makers had concluded that in centuries past, forests across North America were very different from those of today. Small and frequent natural wildfires culled saplings and underbrush. The ponderosa pine forests that dominated the West held an average of about two dozen massive trees per acre. At the turn of the last century the federal government, with the belief that all fires should be extinguished, began to attack lightning strikes as if campaigning against a mortal enemy. The forests grew thick with brush and trees. The average density of ponderosa pine forests rose to 155 trees per acre. The denser forests, full of smaller trees and underbrush, fed fires that leapt across the crowns of trees, burning with an explosive intensity. A hot blaze running before a stiff wind can easily leap an interstate highway.

In the 1980s the western forests reached a critical point. In the Boise National Forest in Idaho, fires had burned an average 3,000 acres per year before 1986. Since then, fires there have burned an average of 63,000 acres. The national yearly cost of fighting fires skyrocketed, too, from an average of \$100 million in the 1970s to \$1 billion in the 1990s. Worse, suburban sprawl increasingly puts people and property in the path of the conflagrations.

In response, the federal government has shifted its fire policy away from a seasonal approach that simply seeks to put out fires and toward a year-long regimen of controlled burns and risk prevention. The push, first articulated by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, was to return fuel-laden western forests to "pre-settlement conditions," a term that refers to the forests before logging, livestock, and fire suppression altered the landscape. Small-scale frequent burns and selective logging would replace the record-setting burns that each year torched hundreds of homes and hundreds of thousands of acres.

In a 1997 speech in Boise, Babbitt described how he had seen fire in thinned forests "'lie down' like a pet dog and move as a ground fire, cleaning out ground fuel and young pine saplings, leaving the larger trees scorched at the base but with crowns intact to continue growing."

Some researchers have argued that the North American wildlands never existed in a vacuum, free of human management. The new fire policies sparked research in some quarters into the traditional uses of fire by American Indians. Scott Stephens, a University of California-Berkeley professor specializing in wildfires, says, "It's clear that forests and ecosystems were carefully managed" by Native Americans who used fire as a tool.

A few years ago, Germaine White (Confederated Salish and Kootenai) worked for the Culture Committee for her tribe on the Flathead Reservation. The committee, White reports, conducted research on the origins and meanings of local place names, scores of which expressly stated or implied the presence of fire. The Salish name for one location, *Np'aa*, means "the burnt-over place."

The committee continued asking elders about their memories of fire. They say fire was an integral part of the local tribal culture. One person held the job of setting controlled burns. The Salish title, *Sxwp'aam*, translates literally into English as "this person sets fires here and there, over and over again." The elders described how fire was used to cleanse the underbrush, allowing huckleberries to flourish in open meadows and increasing the forage for deer and elk.

When the committee began to take elders to specific locations, they found something odd and sad. Many of the places they sought could not be found. A century of fire exclusion had changed the landscape. Once-open hillsides had become strangled with impenetrable brush and trees too thick for a person to pass through. Meadows had become forests of 40foot trees. "The interrelation between places and culture had changed," White says. An important piece – the cleansing force of flame – had been removed.

One day the tribal elder John Peter Paul (Confederated Salish and Kootenai, now deceased) took Culture Committee members by gravel and dirt road to a place east of Ronan, in the foothills of the craggy Mission Mountains. Paul searched for a berry camp, a place where controlled burns had left sunny hillsides where huckleberries grew. Paul told a story about White's grandmother, Angelic White (Confederated Salish and Kootenai), who died in 1935. Paul related that he had been a young boy in the late 1920s when a group headed into the mountains to camp and pick berries. White's grandmother had ridden horseback with other women up a trail there, toward the camp. Paul recalled that somewhere along the trail he had spooked the horses. The elderly women kept their seats, and Paul was punished for his trick.

It's a story White cherishes; she never knew her grandmother, who died before she was born. Paul's story was a new connection to her family. "My grandmother likely traveled that trail when she was a girl, probably with her own grandmother," White says.

But Paul could not find the trail. Thick timber and brush made the area inaccessible, obscuring the trail and the old berry campsite. "That trail is lost to me," White says. "My grandmother knew it as she knew the lines on her mother's face. In part because of fire suppression, I can't travel those trails."

Fire became a passion for White. In 1999, White, who has a master's degree in education administration, passed the pack test and joined the seasonal firefighters. Later, with the help of Harwood, the director of Fire Management for the tribe, she received federal funding for a fire education project. The project, with a budget of \$150,000 over three years, has three components, including a children's storybook about how the beaver stole fire and gave it to people, an educational CD-ROM, and a Web site.

One goal of the project is to remove the stigma of fire as evil and destructive. Another goal is to recover the use of fire as a management tool for the tribe. To that end, the tribe's cultural and fire divisions have begun cooperating, Harwood says. Crews have begun to thin dense stands of timber and set blazes to thin the underbrush and increase berry patches and other traditional foods. "Fire, used in warfare both offensively and defensively, kept the landscape safe and maintained food for our families and our animals," White says. "Like water, fire played an integral part in the natural cycle for tens of thousands of years. Bringing fire back to the landscape is one way we can restore the natural balance and abundance that tribal people have known for millennia. It cannot be fought as if it's evil. Fire is a gift. It is a tool."

Robert Struckman, a freelance writer, lives with his family in western Montana.



Vickie Morigeau has been a Salish Kootenai firefighter for two decades. Her family has been involved with firefighting for many generations.

Women Warriors Clearly courage knows no gender - women account for about 18 percent of Indian firefighters

Delphine Talnagi (San Carlos Apache) turned 18 in 1974 as a wildland firefighter on the San Carlos Apache Reservation in Arizona. The next spring her uncle, Solomon Star (San Carlos Apache), organized an all-woman crew, and Talnagi fought blazes with them from Tennessee to Oregon for two years. Talnagi remembers wetting a bandanna to put across her face to protect against the fire's heat. "Your hair gets scorched. I used to love doing that. It was challenging. It was dangerous," she says.

American Indian women have played a significant role in the wildland fire business for at least three decades. Last year, women accounted for about 18 percent of the total number of Indian firefighters. "That is not a scientific figure. We don't have a database [to track gender]," says Jim Stires, the director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) fire division at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho. "But they're significant contributors."

In the mid-1970s, Southwest communities like San Carlos and Fort Apache began to field allwomen crews. Veterans from that time recall some derisive comments from non-Indian crews, but "Indian men respected us," Talnagi says. The allwomen crews silenced their critics with action. "We got humiliated, laughed at, but we held our heads up high, our chins up. Then they saw we worked hard, and their attitude changed," Talnagi says.

In 1984, Andrea Gilham (Blackfeet) followed her older brothers into the business.

For a number of years she attended college at the University of Montana in Missoula and fought fires during the summers. Then from 1989 to 1991 she worked on a Hotshot crew in the Flathead National Forest. Gilham earned her degree and moved into management, but she continued to work the fire lines every summer. In 2001 she became the first Native American woman to head a BIA fire office at her home in Browning.

Women firefighters in Northern Plains and Rocky Mountains communities were pretty rare until 1987 and 1988, when monstrous blazes drew all available hands. The Yellowstone Fire in 1988 brought Millie Stewart (Crow) and Vicky Morigeau (Confederated Salish & Kootenai) to the work. Stewart, now a nurse in Lame Deer, Mont., used fire money to put herself through college.

The Yellowstone Fire was one of the last for Talnagi, who left the all-woman Ft. Apache Nine in 1989. All-woman crews are now a thing of the past; today women fight fires alongside their male counterparts. – *Robert Struckman*

Woven Histories The Story of Indian Trade Blankets



Portraits of an Omaha woman with child (above) and an Omaha man (facing page). The man and woman were unidentified subjects in a 1906 anthropological research report by Alice Fletcher and Francis La Flesche (Omaha).

By Martha Davidson

"hether wrapped around an infant, worn as a robe, given in a potlatch, or used as bedding, Indian trade blankets have been ubiquitous in the lives of Native Americans for more than 300 years. First introduced by European traders in the 17th century, these plain commercial wool blankets were later designed in the

color and pattern preferences of different Indian nations. Trade blankets – sometimes called Indian blankets or Pendletons, after the most famous manufacturer – gradually took the place of hides or handwoven robes and became essential items of both ceremonial and practical use.

"A blanket accompanies you throughout your lifetime as a means of comfort and warmth," says Hopi artist Preston Duwyenie. "When you are born you are given a blanket; at your death you are again covered in a blanket as a funeral shroud." Between birth and death, blankets are given on other important occasions, such as christenings, weddings, and powwows.

In Hopi and other traditions, the wrapping of a blanket around a newly married couple symbolizes their bonding and shared bed. Duwyenie's wife, Debra (Santa Clara Pueblo), a potter, explains that blankets bestowed at marriage are kept for life and used by the couple at ceremonial times. Her parents, Star and Genevieve Gutierrez, remember when Pueblo people used blankets to carry babies on their backs. In those days, recalls Genevieve Gutierrez, "as soon as a baby was born, it was wrapped in a Pendleton blanket and placed in the cradle, which was hung from the *vigas* (ceiling beams). The cradle was then swung, with the newborn safely tucked in the Pendleton." At death, each side of the family contributes a blankets for the deceased, Star Gutierrez says, "but before the burial, the blankets are slashed so that they will not be heavy for the spirit to carry on its journey."

A blanket from a loved one may be especially valued, used on important occasions, and carefully stored or displayed in the home. "Sometimes when we visit other Pueblo homes, they have their living room decorated with Pendleton blankets," says Debra Duwyenie. "When I ask the family why they have so many blankets, their response is always that they were given through an exchange of reciprocal gifts, or given to them by their godchildren. To me, it shows how well-liked the couple is to have received so many Pendletons."

Although traditions vary among cultures, blankets play an important role throughout Indian Country. Among Northwest Coast tribes, trade blankets became one of the primary goods given in potlatches. In a well-illustrated book, *The Language of the Robe* (Peregrin Smith Books, 1992), Robert Kapoun and Charles Lohrman describe the uses and meanings of American Indian blankets. Patrick Houlihan's foreword to the book relates that 19thcentury Omaha Indians of the Southern Plains wore buffalo robes as a means of expression.

Taken from a 1906 study by Omaha ethnographer Francis La Flesche and anthropologist Alice Fletcher, the explanation includes photographs of a



Photo courtesy of the National Anthropological Archives



Kitch Hawk wears a Chilkat blanket in a photo published in 1888.

Although traditions vary among cultures, blankets play an important role throughout Indian Country. Among Northwest Coast tribes, trade blankets became one of the primary goods given in potlatches. man draping a blanket to show how the buffalo robe was worn. "While each man wore his robe in a manner characteristic of the individual, either gracefully or otherwise, yet there was a typical way of expressing certain purposes or feelings by the adjustment of the robe that was persistent and easily recognizable," observed Fletcher and La Flesche. They noted that the blanket or robe is probably one of the oldest items of clothing and that "the manner of fashioning and of wearing the robe has acquired during the centuries a ceremonial and a personal significance that does not belong to any other garment."

Blankets served practical purposes as well. They could be pawned for money to get by in hard times and reclaimed later, providing economic security. As shawls or bedding, they offered warmth. Star Gutierrez recalls when Pendleton blankets were hung in Pueblo doorways: "Because they were heavy, the blankets could keep out the cold during the cold months and keep out the heat and sunlight during the hot months."

The Language of the Robe and another informative and beautifully illustrated book, Barry Friedman's *Chasing Rainbows* (Bullfinch Press, 2002), both offer advice for collectors and trace the history of trade blankets.

The story of Indian blankets began long before the arrival of Europeans. The Native peoples of North America originally used materials native to their regions to fashion robes and shawls: animal hides, such as the buffalo robes of the Great Plains; plant fibers, including cotton in the Southwest and cedar bark in the Northwest Coast; and goat- or dog-hair yarn or strips of fur. When sheep's wool arrived with the Spanish in the late 16th century, Pueblo and Navajo weavers began producing woolen blankets for trade. Navajo women were noted for their fine weaving, and their robes were highly prized by other tribes from Mexico to Canada.

The Hudson's Bay Company, the first English trading company to operate in North America, introduced European blankets in the late 1600s as one of their earliest exchange items. In 1780, a Hudson's Bay trader in Ontario commissioned a large order of white woolen blankets from an English weaver. Thick, warm, and of high quality, the blankets were valued by some Northern Plains Indians who made them into coats and leggings for winter hunting. The hunters traded furs for blankets on a point system, with one point equal to one good pelt from a full-grown beaver. Small stripes on each blanket indicated how many points or half-points it was worth: six for the thickest, one for the thinnest. The point system

became so standardized that it took on the function of currency. Initially hand-loomed, the blankets became mass-produced with improvements in textile machinery during the Industrial Revolution. To gain an advantage over French traders, the Hudson's Bay Company added the bands of red, black, green, and yellow that we associate with their blankets today.

When the Indian Wars of the late 19th century forced the last free tribes onto reservations, treaties stipulated that the U.S. government would provide for their basic needs. Army officers or federal agents delivered some essential goods, including blankets, and enterprising traders opened posts near the reservations, with blankets a significant part of their stock.

Manufacturers competed for the American Indian market by producing trade blankets in colorful designs. The Jacquard loom, developed in France in the 1840s, enabled them to produce more intricate patterns and reversible designs, positive on one side, negative on the other. Unlike some other goods sold to Native Americans in the late 19th century, these blankets were of outstanding quality and beauty and reasonably priced. They soon replaced handwoven blankets and buffalo robes. Of the seven U.S. companies that dominated the industry during its "golden age" (1892-1942), Oregon's Pendleton Woolen Mills was not the first to produce Indian trade blankets - that honor goes to J. Capps & Sons of Illinois - but it was the first to specialize in American Indian blankets and the only one to continue producing them after World War II.

As railroads were built in the West, they facilitated shipment of the textiles and brought an influx of white settlers and tourists. A curious symbiosis developed between the traders and Navajo weavers. Traders encouraged weavers to produce rugs, rather than blankets, of thicker, commercially dyed yarn. It was far more profitable to weave a rug, which could be traded for several blankets or other items, than to weave a single blanket.

The trader benefited, too, in selling the rugs to tourists. As the demand for Navajo rugs grew, weavers adopted designs, such as borders, that appealed to the Anglo market. At the same time, the woolen mills made great efforts to understand the design traditions of particular tribes in order to produce blankets that would appeal to them. The blankets designed for the Indian market were also promoted to non-Native consumers and collectors through catalogs and advertisements. Although all of the companies used six basic patterns – striped, banded, with an overall design or center point,



A silver gelatin print circa 1910 shows an unidentified Navajo woman weaving a blanket on an upright wooden loom.

or featuring six or nine main elements (only Pendleton produced bordered blankets) – each mill had its own distinctive palette and developed unique designs. For many years the designers were predominately if not exclusively white Americans or Europeans, but they were always guided by Indian aesthetics.

Ramona Sakiestewa, a well-known Hopi textile artist who is closely involved with the design of the National Museum of the American Indian, approached Pendleton with a proposal for blanket designs in the early 1990s; her Southwest Trails series of Pendleton blankets was produced in 1994. Pendleton has also featured the work of other contemporary Indian artists, particularly in its Philanthropic Partnership Program. Although there has been a revival of hand weaving in recent decades, particularly among the Chilkat of the Northwest Coast, Sakiestewa believes that mass-produced trade blankets will remain a vital part of Indian culture. With Indians accounting for more than 50 percent of all trade blanket purchases in the United States, that prediction seems likely to prove accurate. "Blankets are an ongoing cultural icon as well as a commodity," says Sakiestewa. "Blankets will never go out of vogue. People will always use them."

Martha Davidson is a Washington, D.C.-based writer who contributes frequently to American Indian.

Sauninga Shines On

The NMAI introduces its first blanket in collaboration with Pendleton Woolen Mills



Truman Lowe (Ho-Chunk)

Although a number of gifted artists and designers are affiliated with the NMAI, Director Rick West had no doubt that Truman Lowe should be the designer of this piece. hen Truman Lowe (Ho-Chunk) was asked to design a Pendleton blanket for the National Museum of the American Indian, he first looked to the museum's collection for ideas. Lowe focused on Woodland items in the textile collection of approximately 600 hand-loomed Navajo robes and Pendleton blankets. He ultimately found inspiration in a more personal collection: the ribbonwork designs of his late mother, Mabel Davis Lowe (Ho-Chunk).

"She did a lot of traditional ribbonwork and other art, and I always wanted to use her work in some way," says Lowe, who grew up watching his mother create appliqué patterns from paper, using grocery bags, old maps, or other scraps. When she died in 1976, Lowe asked his brothers and sisters for those paper patterns; it was all he wanted of their mother's belongings. His request was granted, and in November 2002, as he contemplated the blanket project, he looked at the pieces again. He settled on a small pattern for a ribbon appliqué.

He repeated the pattern in different colors and reversed it for symmetry. Lowe selected the patterned band colors carefully: reds, browns, blues, a purple that is almost white, and gray. "Some colors are based on the tones of natural dyes," he says, "but the more important reason for their selection was that they were complementary and could create an impression of fading."

The blue background becomes subtly darker toward the center. The fading from light to dark is meant to convey a feeling of depth. "I wanted to create a sensation of looking down into a window – a window to history, to tradition, to opportunities that may be found in the past." The design, in effect, is a metaphor for the museum and its mission. It is also a lasting tribute to his talented mother, Mabel Davis Lowe. "The blanket is titled *Sauninga*, which means 'the shining one' in Ho-Chunk," Lowe explains. "It was my mother's given Indian name."

The idea of creating a blanket originated a year ago with Elizabeth Duggal, NMAI's director of external affairs and development. "Blankets are a very important symbol for Native communities," she explains. "At the museum, we always honor people – friends, donors, special guests – by wrapping them in blankets, but we did not have a blanket of our own. We felt the museum should have its own blanket, and since we wanted to do something on a large enough scale to include our membership, we looked for a manufacturer who

could handle mass production. Pendleton was the logical choice."

Museum Director Rick West (Southern Cheyenne) was enthusiastic. Duggal and West knew about Pendleton's Philanthropic Partnership Program, which has aided the American Indian College Fund and other organizations. "Pendleton has a wonderful reputation and history with Indian Country," says Duggal. "I approached them, and they were very receptive."

Although a number of gifted artists and designers are affiliated with the NMAI, Rick West had no doubt that Truman Lowe should be the designer of this piece. Lowe, an internationally acclaimed sculptor and former professor of art at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the NMAI's curator of contemporary art. His works, influenced by his ancestral culture and landscape, have been widely exhibited at venues including the Minneapolis Museum of Art, the Denver Art Museum, and the White House Sculpture Garden.

For Pendleton, the dark blue blanket is a break from tradition. Most of the company's early pieces were designed for the Southwest, and a palette of browns and grays reminiscent of the desert has persisted in its blanket colors. Robert Christnacht, Pendleton's liaison with the NMAI, says that the company is delighted with the uniqueness of the dark blue blanket. The blanket will be introduced in Pendleton's fall catalog.

Only 500 limited collectors' editions of *Sauninga* will be available at a retail price of \$495 each and will include a hand-numbered leather patch that is hand-signed by Lowe and the museum's director, W. Richard West (Southern Cheyenne). The blanket will be trimmed with black ultrasuede and will come in a handcrafted cedar box. A limited members' edition will also be numbered and packaged in a felt-lined box at \$299 each. An unlimited edition of *Sauninga* will retail for \$249. The blanket can be purchased by calling 800-242-6624 or by visiting www.americanindian.si.edu.

West and Lowe already have plans for the blanket. As a newly elected member of the Southern Cheyenne Society of Chiefs, West will present a blanket at a giveaway in early September. Lowe will present one to the traditional chief of the Ho-Chunk at their Labor Day powwow in Black River Falls, Wisconsin. He will also make a gift of *Sauninga* to each of his brothers and sisters.

– Martha Davidson





Crumbling Beauty

The restoration of Alaska's historic Kake Cannery has become a mission for the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people who toiled there for nearly a century



Top: A side view of the Kake Cannery in Kake, Alaska. The cannery operated from 1912 to 1981 and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1997 by the National Park Service. Above: Parts of the Kake Cannery have collapsed due to heavy snow loads, rotting wood, and neglect. Right: A painting of Gunakadeit, a sea monster from Tlingit stories is painted on the side of the Kake Cannery laundry building.

By Joanna Markell

he machinery inside the Kake Cannery in Alaska sits idle these days; the long days of sorting, gutting, and canning fish are past. Aged stacks of cardboard boxes wait to be assembled and filled with cans of salmon. Glass pop bottles are scattered around the dock, reminders of precious break time.

The cannery, which operated from 1912 to 1981, was a center of activity in the city of Kake, situated on Kupreanof Island about 90 air miles southwest of Juneau, Alaska. "Nearly everyone in town worked there at one point or another," says Edna Jackson (Tlingit), an environmental officer for the Organized Village of Kake, a federally recognized tribal government that works on education, economic development, and social service projects. Kake also has a separate city government. "I worked here six, seven years. It was a summer job," she says about the cannery, which provided employment to the community's Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people. "We were happy for these jobs, even though it was hard work."

The National Park Service declared the complex of warehouses, boardwalk, docks, homes, and other buildings a National Historic Landmark in 1997 because of its significance to maritime, industrial, social, and labor history. Linda Cook, a former National Register historian for the National Park Service in Alaska, says it is the only cannery in Alaska to be given the honor. "In Alaska we looked at what we had that exemplified labor history in the state, and it was cannery history," she says.

Kake – population 700 or so – can only be reached by boat or airplane. The cannery site was originally a traditional Tlingit fishing camp, a place where the *Keex' Kwaan*, meaning "people of Kake" in Tlingit, went to catch and preserve salmon. Nearby creeks are filled with spawning fish during the summer, attracting anglers, tourists, and bears.

Processors from outside of Alaska first appeared in Kake in 1906, when the Kake Trading and Packing Company opened a king salmon saltery on the future cannery site. The Sanborn Cutting Company followed, building the cannery structure in 1912, part of which is still standing today. Other firms, such as the Sunny Point Packing Company and P.E. Harris, ran the cannery until the Organized Village of Kake formed under the Indian Reorganization Act in 1947 and purchased it. The 1934 act increased tribal self-government and provided financial assistance for economic development projects. The tribe renamed the cannery the Keku Canning Company after nearby Keku Strait, but the operation has been called the Kake Cannery throughout its history.





The cannery was a major employer in Kake, hiring Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Native, and Caucasian workers. While local residents went home for lunch and dinner, the mess hall had separate sections for Caucasian and Asian workers, says Mike Jackson (Tlingit and Haida), a trust officer for the Organized Village of Kake, who is married to Edna Jackson. "Workers slept in bungalows and segregated bunkhouses along the waterfront," he says. "The cook had to be a cook of two cultures. Most of the time the Filipinos would cook for the Chinese and the Japanese, but they were also the cook for the Caucasians."

The Kake Cannery was one of 134 canneries built in southeastern Alaska from 1878 to 1949, according to the National Park Service. The buildings are still owned by the Organized Village of Kake, which has its tribal office in the old mess hall.

The Kake Cannery processed all five species of Alaska salmon including king, coho, sockeye, chum, and pink, though chum and pink were its mainstay. Early operations took advantage of huge standing fish traps, which were banned after Alaska became a state in 1959. Purse seine boats, a type of fishing boat that uses a net shaped like a purse, also supplied the processing lines. At one point, Kake had more than 20 seine boats, but now it has eight, Mike Jackson says. Large-scale fish farms, where salmon are grown in pens, have since brought increased competition for wild salmon. Fewer fishermen work in southeast Alaska's waters today.

Local women worked in the cannery's processing lines, removing bones from cans and tending to a giant machine that removed the heads and tails from salmon and gutted the fish. They also worked on what Edna Jackson calls "the slime line," where they cleaned fish by hand. Later in its history, the Kake Cannery processed salmon roe, or eggs, for shipment to Japan. Rosie Shaquanie (Tlingit), 65, started working at the cannery in 1954 when she was 17. "We couldn't break the eggs apart or anything," she says. "They had to be perfect as we grabbed them; otherwise the customers didn't want them."

Adeline Jackson (Tlingit), 74, says her family used to move from the town of Kake to the cannery's company houses, about a mile away, during fishing season. Today, Kake's homes and businesses have grown around the cannery complex. "My mom and dad had their own little house and we used to sleep there, because everybody used to move down there when fishing season began and the cannery started operating," she says. "There were no roads then, just a trail."



Above: Mike Jackson, a trust officer for the Organized Village of Kake stands next to the retorts in the Kake Cannery in southeast Alaska. Cans of salmon were sterilized in the retorts under steam pressure. Far left: A still functioning metal lathe sits in the metal shop of the Kake Cannery. Inset, from top: Evelyn Martin worked in the can shop making cans, the slime line and the table. Rosie Shaquanie worked at a machine sorting salmon eggs. Willis Jackson was a crew member on a purse seiner and also worked at the cannery loading cans into boxes. Virginia (Cookie) Copsey worked in the can loft of the cannery.

Adeline Jackson began working in the cannery when she was 13, starting on the slime line. Days could be long. At the season's peak, workers might stay until 4 a.m., go home to catch a few hours sleep, and be back at 8 a.m. One long day, she ran to the warehouse to rest on top of the warm cans during a break. "The rest of the ladies went to look for us and they couldn't find us. When they did, they were putting cold paper towels on our faces, trying to wake us up," she laughs. "You have to make it a fun thing so you don't get tired."

Today, major parts of the cannery are still standing. The retorts, which cooked and sterilized the cans of fish under steam pressure, are still in place. A blue bus that picked up the ladies in the morning and took them home for lunch and dinner is parked inside the retort building, which is now used for storage.

Other parts of the cannery are "standing on a prayer," Edna Jackson says. Many of the company houses are gone or uninhabitable. The floor of the egg room is carpeted with moss; rust permeates the machine shop. Signs warn people against going inside the buildings because of asbestos and weak pilings.

Ralph Gregory, an architect who has studied the cannery buildings, says the condition of the structures varies greatly. "There are some areas of the building that are in quite good condition and some areas that really are in tough shape," he says. "One thing we've seen happen is that floating debris gets under the building and does terrible damage." Holes in the roof are another problem. In one warehouse, small trees and vegetation have started to grow between old fishing nets. "I think you could go to work and virtually save the entire structure now," Gregory says. "The problem is that roofing either blows off or just fails. And as water increasingly comes through the roof you immediately get increased decay and rot to the floor structure inside the building."

The Organized Village of Kake received \$300,000 from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to make emergency repairs this year, money that will be used to replace structural pilings and rebuild part of the warehouse building. The tribe also has applied for funding from the National Park Service. According to Edna Jackson it could take \$10 million to completely renovate the complex.

"People won't want to put money into it if it's just going to sit empty," she says. "We want to have a museum, we want to have a performing arts space, and we'd like to have a shopping mall-type area for cottage industrytype stuff." She states the cannery could also be a tourist attraction.

Southeastern Alaska is a popular destination for cruise ship passengers in the summer, and Kake is seeing growing numbers of tourists on yachts and small tour ships who are attracted by the village's culture, scenery, wildlife, and fishing. "Renovating the docks outside might attract more tourists and serve 100- to 150-passenger cruise ships," Mike Jackson says. The tribe also envisions adding a small canning line inside or using the space for the town's recycling program. "What we found is that it's worthwhile to keep [the cannery] because if somehow we can restore it back to where we can occupy it, we'd probably use it for all different kinds of economic development, starting with tourism," he says. "They're coming here whether we like it or not."

The buildings offer more than economic development. "The history is important to the local people," Edna Jackson says. "Almost every man fished and almost every woman worked down there. It's a huge part of the town's history. And it could still be an important economic and social entity."

Joanna Markell is a writer who lives in Ketchikan, Alaska.

Warm Welcome

The extraordinary Museum at Warm Springs provides a unique setting for the rich culture and history of the Paiute, Wasco, and Warm Springs People

By Kara Briggs

he roofline of the Museum at Warm Springs beckons from U.S. Highway 26. It rises at one end like a longhouse, in the middle as a travois top, and as a tipi peak at the other end. The decade-old building represents the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs – the Paiute, the Wasco, and the Warm Springs peoples, whose separate and shared histories are represented in the museum. The Confederated Tribes have shared this high desert eastern flank of Mount Hood for nearly 150 years, since a



Architect Don Stasny consulted extensively with tribal members before beginning his designs for the Museum at Warm Springs (pictured above).

series of U.S. policies and treaties forced them together from their homelands on the Great Basin to the south and the Columbia River to the north. The tribes united in the 20th century to build a strong government and an economic base that includes the 35-year-old Ka-Nee-Ta High Desert Resort, 11 miles from the museum. Yet they continue to celebrate their cultural distinctions, through the museum and the Warm Springs language program which is used in writing and audio recordings throughout the museum.

The museum also shows ways that the tribes come together, practically through tribal government and symbolically around the drum which is common to all three tribes. Visitors enter through a stone drum made from huge basalt semicircular walls with an open sky ceiling. Above the entry, stone tiles engraved with the Warm Springs word *Twanat*, which means "to follow," beckon visitors on. Tribal elders began calling for the museum in the 1950s. It took until 1989 for the tribes' members to respond by voting to get started on the nearly \$7.6 million project.

Before developing the blueprint, architect Don Stastny, of Portland, Ore., set up an office in a trailer on the reservation and invited people to come talk. Though Stastny isn't a tribal member, he is familiar with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs people, as he grew up in a nearby town with children from the tribes. As soon as he opened shop, tribal members from children to elders stopped by.

The resounding message he heard was that the building needed to "tell the truth" about all the peoples of the tribes. He incorporated their ideas and inspiration throughout the building, from the roofline to the brick pattern that resembles the tribe's fishing nets to brass door handles in the shape of a male powwow dancer's feather bustle.

Stastny has since been hired by more than 10 tribes to design museums, but only the one for the Gila River Indian Community in Arizona has been built. Construction of the Huhugam Heritage Center was completed the week after the Museum at Warm Springs' 10th anniversary. It opens next year.

The Warm Springs tribes gathered in the amphitheater behind the museum on the first Saturday last June to celebrate the museum's anniversary. Stastny joined the tribes' elders to reminisce while salmon cooked on an open fire, horses paraded in regalia, and children played on the banks of the creek that runs behind the museum. As tribal families drifted in and out of the permanent exhibit that day, the museum seemed to be the tribes' shared living room.

The museum's collection of 4,200 artifacts was donated or purchased from tribal members, starting in 1972. Every year the tribe buys more artifacts from its members. Some like Bernice Mitchell (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs) know the familial origins of each piece. "When we are lonely we come here and see the artifacts," she says. "They are the gifts we gave to one another." Curator Natalie Kirk (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs) calls them "precious objects."

Carol Leone, the museum's executive director, says some of the pieces most unique to these tribes are the beaded bags. The beadwork depicts pictorial scenes that are almost botanical in their realism. Flowers are frequently shown with their roots and leaves, which grow asymetrically from the stem, and make the pieces different from the more stylized floral designs of the Eastern Woodland tribes.

In the summer, staff members teach beadwork and weaving classes to children in tipis. At the heart of the Warm Springs Museum, the recorded voices of tribal members explain the traditions behind the objects in display cases. Historic photographs lead the visitor through the 20th century and the tribe's economic development and environmental work to protect salmon-bearing creeks and high elevation huckleberry patches.

Finally, a video camera captures visitors on a TV monitor, where they seem to stand alongside a young hoop dancer. Hoops lie on the floor waiting for visitors – usually the children who are the next generation – to pick them up and dance.

Kara Briggs (Yakama) is a reporter for The Oregonian in Portland and is a past president of the Native American Journalists Association.

KAH-NEE-TA

A trip to Warm Springs wouldn't be complete without a stay at the Kah-Nee-Ta High Desert Resort. Renovated in the 1990s, the resort's European health spa and fine dining in the Juniper Room invite visitors inside the arrow-shaped building. Nearby Kah-Nee-Ta Village's mineral pools, filled with piping hot spring water for which the reservation is named, await visitors who camp in tipi rentals or RV parking. The village offers golf, tennis, horseback riding, bicycle rentals, and kayaking.

The Warm Springs Indian Reservation is 120 miles east of Portland, Ore. Reach Kah-Nee-Ta High Desert Resort and Casino by taking the Simnasho Junction turn off U.S. 26. For reservations and information, call 1-800-554-4786,or write Kah-Nee-Ta, P.O. Box K, Warm Springs, Ore. 97761 and visit www.warmsprings.com

The Confederated Tribes have shared this high desert eastern flank of Mount Hood for nearly 150 years.

FALLAR BOOM



Vanessa Short Bull, Oglala Lakota. Political Science major, dancer, spokesperson for Native American cancer awareness, Miss South Dakota USA 2000.

COLLEGE

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COLLECTIONS

The Language of Native American Baskets: From the Weaver's View

By Bruce Bernstein

"He was sitting by his campfire, listening to the star echoes. His burden basket rested upright against a pine.

"The voices inside the basket got pretty loud and disturbed Coyote.

"He stuck his head inside the basket and said, 'You people be more quiet or I'm going to dump you out all over the world.'

"They didn't make another sound for many, many eternities."

> From Elderberry Flute Song: Contemporary Coyote Tales, by Peter Blue Cloud (Mohawk)

s the Mohawk writer Peter Blue Cloud makes clear in the scene described above, many Native American cultures believe that baskets were not given during the Creation, but were already part of that first world. In earlier days, baskets accompanied Indian people throughout their lives. Babies were carried in baskets, meals were prepared and cooked in them, worldly goods were stored in them, and people were buried in them.

Baskets continue to occupy an important place in the lives of American Indian peoples, made for sale or for use in ceremonies, and valued as heirlooms and markers of cultural identity. In communities throughout North America, Indian people are teaching and learning basketweaving as part of a broader cultural renaissance.

As works of art, the most accomplished baskets express a subtle dialogue between the individual weaver's creativity and his or, more often, her cultural traditions. This dialogue – the aesthetic language of Native American baskets – encompasses not only the social connections between the weaver and her family, other tribal members, and the broader world, but also her relationship to the natural environment and to other weavers.

In my discussions with basket-makers, I have found that weavers talk about subtle details of the techniques and materials used in constructing baskets more often than about finished baskets. When a basket-maker admires the materials in another weaver's work, for example, she is commenting on the long and

elaborate process of gathering, preparing, and using roots, branches, and grasses the weaver has learned and mastered. Regardless of the maker's weaving skill, a basket made of improperly prepared materials will have uneven stitches and designs, and may warp, split, or twist with time. Welltended bushes, properly pruned each year, produce the straight shoots necessary to make slender, strong, and pliable warp rods and sewing threads. Plants harvested at the proper time of year will yield fibers of the required color, strength, straightness, and absence of scars.

When she compliments another weaver's work, she does not hold the basket at arm's length and marvel. Rather, she looks to see how it is begun and finished, what weave or combination of weaves plaiting, wicker, twining, or coiling - its maker used and how she used them, her choice of stitching, which designs she chose and how she placed them on the basket's surface. Understanding a basket's use can help make sense of the basket-maker's decisions about its design. The side of a burden basket that is worn against the

back often has a very different design from

the side that faces out. Too often, when people think about American Indian baskets, they assume that the weavers who make them are hemmed in by tribal rules that govern the "traditional" arts. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Tradition is not a list of rules, but rather a set of values by which the weaver works. These values may tell her to use plain twining to make a winnowing basket, but they also allow her to create a masterpiece, different from every other winnowing tray.

This article is excerpted from the book and the exhibition The Language of Native American Baskets: From the Weavers' View by Bruce Bernstein, NMAI's assistant director for cultural resources. The exhibition highlights the museum's basketry collections and is on view at the George Gustav Heye Center in New York City through 2004.

Hi everyone!

It is your good friend, Coyote. I am here in Florida visiting my Seminole friends. by Paul Betancourt (Seneca)

Today's Seminole people are the descendants of various Native nations from Georgia and Alabama and include the Creek, Yuchi, and Yamassee. The Seminole moved to Florida in the 1700s to seek a life of peace. The word "Seminole" comes from the Spanish word *cimarrones*, which means "free people."

Meet my friend Carol Cypress, a Seminole storyteller who lives on the Hollywood, Fla., Seminole Reservation. She visited the National Museum of the American Indian in New York City last February for the Art of Storytelling. Carol shared some of the stories that Seminole children hear not only to entertain them but also to teach them important life lessons. Here is one of my favorites.



Photo by William Chir

How the Possum Got Her Pouch

ne day, Possum was taking care of her babies. She began to get hungry. She did not want to carry her babies, so she looked around for a safe place to put them. Possum found a hollow tree, placed the babies in the trunk, and went off to eat. When Possum returned to the tree trunk, she heard her babies crying. When she looked in the tree trunk, she saw many bats bothering her babies. There were too many bats for Possum to help the babies. Possum began to cry and started walking away.

Turtle was nearby and saw Possum crying. He asked her what was wrong. Possum told Turtle about the trouble her babies were facing. Turtle told Possum that he could help her. They walked back to the tree trunk. Turtle looked inside. He saw all the bats. Turtle thought about how to save the babies. He began to yell and bang on the tree trunk with a stick. The noise scared the bats and they flew away. Possum's babies were now safe.

Turtle was a medicine turtle, and he had one more idea to help Possum protect her babies. Turtle told Possum to lie down on her back. Turtle then put Possum to sleep. As Possum slept, Turtle cut a pouch on Possum's belly and woke her up when he was done. Possum asked Turtle why he had cut a pouch on her belly. He told her to always keep the babies in the pouch and never leave them alone where others could mistreat them. This is why Possum always carries her babies in a pouch on her belly.

This story teaches Seminole girls to never leave their babies alone and to always take care of them.

Seminole Bone Game

YOU

Ne

The Seminole play a game called the bone game. They use the knee bone of a cow. Numbers are written on the sides and ends of the bone. The bone is tossed like dice. Each player makes ten marks on the ground. Players erase the mark that matches the number they roll on the bone. The first person to erase all of his or her numbers wins.

The following instruction is a version of the game you can play at home with friends, using a pair of dice.

What You Need:

Instructions:

- Two or more players
- A pair of dice
- Pencils and paper
- 1. Players sit in a circle on the ground.
- 2. Each player writes the numbers 1 to 12 on a piece of paper.
- 3. The first person to roll a 6 starts the game.
- Each player rolls the dice and then erases the number he or she rolls.
- 5. If a number is rolled that was already erased from the paper, the dice are passed to the next player.
- 6. If the numbers left are under 7, use one die to roll numbers 1 to 6. 7. The first person to erase all numbers from his or her paper wins.

Fact:

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CALENDAR of EVENTS

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2003

EXHIBITIONS

CONTINUUM: 12 ARTISTS Through Nov. 28, 2004

This 18-month exhibition series will feature a changing selection of works by two contemporary Native American artists who represent the generation of art succeeding George Morrison (1919-2000; Grand Portage Band of the Lake Superior Ojibwe) and Allan Houser (1914-1994; Warm Springs Chiricahua Apache), two major figures of 20th-century Native American art. Like Morrison and Houser, these artists draw from a variety of influences, both within and outside art schools and universities. Exploring new directions, they have established reputations as groundbreakers in the realm of contemporary art and Native American art history. The series opened in April 2003 with the work of Kay WalkingStick (Cherokee) and Rick Bartow (Yurok-Mad River Band). Opening the next installments will be Joe Feddersen (Colville) on Aug. 2 and Harry Fonseca on Aug. 16. Other artists in the series will include Hachivi Edgar Heap of Birds, George Longfish, Judith Lowry, Nora Naranjo-Morse, Shelley Niro, Jaune Quick-to-See-Smith, Marie Watt, and Richard Ray Whitman. The artists represent the Arapaho, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Colville, Cree, Flathead, Hamowi-Pit River, Hawaiian, Mohawk, Mountain Maidu, Nisenan Maidu, Pueblo Santa Clara, Seneca, Shoshone, Tuscarora, Yuchi, and Yurok cultures.

Curator's and Artists' Dialogue July 31, 5 p.m. August 14, 5 p.m. Collector's Office

Works in sandblasted blown glass by Joe Feddersen from Continuum: 12 Artists at the National Museum of the American Indian on view August 2 - October 26, 2003. Above, center: Tire, 2003. 14 1/2 x 12 3/4." Top right: Cinder Block, 2003. 16 x 11 1/4." Center right: Parking Lot, 2003. 14 x 10 3/4."









LEGENDS OF OUR TIMES: NATIVE RANCHING AND RODEO LIFE ON THE PLAINS AND THE PLATEAU

May 17, 2003 through March 7, 2004 This exhibition traces the history of Native people as buffalo hunters, horsemen, ranchers, and cowboys and as entertainers and participants in the sport of rodeo. With 700 objects including saddles, blankets, clothing, and horse equipment, the exhibition presents the connections between traditional Plains and Plateau cultures and such animals as the horse, the buffalo, and the dog and explains how these connections influenced the Native cowboy's perspective on ranching and rodeo life.

Left: Jackson Sundown's bridle. Sundown won many saddles, trophies, and prizes in a successful career. It is still possible to find his championship saddles and other memorabilia in the proud possession of people who admire his skill and courage. This bridle is an excellent example of the skill of horsehair hitching.



THE LANGUAGE OF NATIVE AMERICAN BASKETS: FROM THE WEAVERS' VIEW

Sept. 20, 2003 to Jan. 9, 2005 This exhibition will feature more than 200 baskets from the NMAI collection and will present basketmaking according to the Native cultural viewpoint, focusing on the process of making a basket rather than on the finished basket as an object.

Yurok cylindrical basket decorated with painting and woodpecker feathers, used in the jump dance.

Chumash basket and cover, ca. 1900. Santa Ynez, Calif.



Makah deer antlers, covered with twined and plain weave basketry.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

STORYBOOK READINGS: FROM THE SHELVES OF THE RESOURCE CENTER

On the second Saturday of every month at 2 p.m. Resource Center, second floor Join us for storybook readings featuring stories about the Native peoples of the Western Hemisphere. For children of all ages.

GALLERY DISCUSSION

Every Monday to Friday at 2 p.m. Rotunda Meet one of the museum's cultural interpreters for an informal gallery discussion.

CONTEMPORARY ART WORKSHOP: DRAWING WITH JUDIE EMERSON

Aug. 14, 3 - 5 p.m. Orientation Room Aug. 16, 11 - 1 p.m. Education Classroom, second floor Judie Emerson (Cherokee) will conduct a drawing exercise based on the contemporary Native art exhibit Continuum: 12 Artists. Ages 18 years and up. Pre-registration is required; call (212) 514-3714. Materials fee is \$10 (\$8 for members).

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION

Saraguro Rainbow-Necklace Workshop Sept. 25, 4 - 7 p.m. Sept. 26, 1 - 4 p.m. Education Classroom, second floor Join Lucia Gualan (Saraguro) in this two-day workshop. Participants will make a rainbow-style beaded necklace like those worn by Saraguro women of Ecuador. The small beads require good eyesight and manual dexterity. Enrollment is limited and advance registration is required; call (212) 514-3714. Materials fee is \$25 (\$22 for members). Ages 16 years and up.

NYC CULTURE FEST 2003

Sept. 20 and 21, 11 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Across State Street in historic Battery Park. Free.

This year, the museum is proud to be a part of NYC Culture Fest 2003, a celebration of New York's cultural community in historic Battery Park, by presenting some of the basketweavers whose work will be on display in The Language of Native American Baskets: From the Weavers' View. Visitors will enjoy performances, workshops, games, and raffles from the dozens of NYC cultural institutions that will be participating in the annual festival.

NATIVE SOUNDS DOWNTOWN Don't Miss a Beat!

KEITH SECOLA AND THE WILD BAND with special guest Howard Lyons

Aug. 7, 2003, 7 p.m.; GGHC Auditorium

Three-time Native American Music Awards winner Keith Secola (Anishinabe) blends folk, rock, and reggae with a distinct Native American sound. The Wild Band will support his celebration of contemporary and traditional Native music. This performance also features a special guest appearance by traditional folk singer Howard Lyons (Mohawk).

CLAN/DESTINE

Aug. 14, 2003; 7 p.m.; GGHC Auditorium

The music of Clan/destine has a rock edge with a Native flair. Original members of Clan/destine reunite for this high-energy presentation, which incorporates dance and music fortified by an impressive array of musical styles.

LA CASITA: A HOME FOR THE HEART

Aug. 27, 5:30 p.m.; NMAI Cobblestone Area (Auditorium in case of rain) This multicultural presentation is a collaboration with Lincoln Center Out of Doors and features the words and music of eight poets and ensembles representing the oral traditions of their cultures. Native artists include Cochise Anderson (Chickasaw/Choctaw), Mark Turcotte (Ojibwe), Howard Lyons (Mohawk), and SilverCloud Drum Group. Lincoln Center Out of Doors is funded by Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman. La Casita project is funded by PepsiCo, Inc. NMAI programming is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

FAMILY WORKSHOP SERIES

This series of workshops is especially for kids, ages eight and up, and families. Parents/chaperones are required to attend and assist their children. Workshops are free, but pre-registration is required; call (212) 514-3714.

PLAINS PARFLECHE FOLDER WORKSHOP

Aug. 7, 4 - 6 p.m. Aug. 9, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Education Classroom, second floor

These lightweight folders, made from rawhide, were used by Plains cultures to store objects, materials, and food. NMAI Cultural Interpreter Angela Friedlander (Métis) will tour the Legends of Our Time exhibition to look at examples of parfleche folders and instruct participants on making and decorating parfleche folders using paper bags.

NATIVE BASKET WEAVING WORKSHOP

Oct. 9, 5 - 7 p.m. Oct. 16, 5 - 7 p.m. Education Classroom, second floor

Angela Friedlander (Métis), NMAI cultural interpreter, will lead participants through the Native basket exhibit The Language of Native American Baskets: From the Weavers' View. Workshop participants will then make their own basket sample using plastic cups and yarn.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Andes Manta: Music of the Andean Highlands

Anaean Highands Sept. 19 and 20, 2 p.m. NMAI-GGHC Location The four Lopez brothers, originally from the Ecuadorean Andes, perform traditional music from their homeland on a variety of wind, plucked string, and percussion instruments, including charango, zampoñas, quena, ocarina, and guitar. This program is supported by a grant from the Latino Initiatives Pool, administered by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives.

CONTEMPORARY ART WORKSHOP

Oct. 23, 5 - 7 p.m. Education Classroom, second floor Contemporary artist Nadema Agard (Cherokee/Lakota/Powhatan) will guide participants through the exhibit Continuum: 12 Artists and conduct a hands-on art activity based on the exhibit. Ages 18 years and up. Pre-registration required; call (212) 514-3714. Materials fee is \$10 (\$8 for members).

ART TALK

Oct. 10, noon Video Viewing Room, second floor Video artist Beverly Singer (Tewa/Dine) will conduct a visual lecture based on her work in the American Indian Community House Gallery exhibition Lady Liberty as Native American Icon.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS IN D.C.

YOUNG CROW POETS COME TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

Sept. 30, 10:30 a.m. - noon Discovery Theatre, Arts & Industry Building, 900 Jefferson Drive SW High-school students from the Crow Indian Reservation, Lodge Grass, Mont., will share their experiences of living on the Crow Reservation from their unique perspective through poetry. Call (202) 357-2700 (TTY: (202) 357-1729) for more information. Free.

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL

Oct. 4, 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., National Mall

The third annual festival, sponsored by the Library of Congress and First Lady Laura Bush, with support from NMAI and other cultural institutions, will feature novelist Susan Power (Standing Rock Sioux), storyteller Gayle Ross (Cherokee), and other Native writers among more than 60 nationally prominent writers and storytellers. Visit www.loc.gov for more information. Free.

ANDES MANTA: MUSIC OF THE ANDEAN HIGHLANDS Oct. 10, 6 p.m.

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 2700 F Street NW. The four Lopez brothers, originally from the Ecuadorean Andes, perform traditional music from their homeland on an incredible variety of wind, plucked string, and percussion instruments, including charango, zampoñas, quena, ocarina, and guitar. This program is supported by a grant from the Latino Initiatives Pool, administered by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives. Call (202) 467-4600 or visit http://kennedy-center.org for more information. Free.

NAVAJO WEAVING IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY: HISTORY, MATERIALS, DESIGN

Oct. 10 -12

\$215 for Members of NMAI, The Textile Museum, and the Gloria F. Ross Center for Tapestry Studies. \$260 for nonmembers (includes a one-year membership to The Textile Museum)

\$175 for students with valid I.D. (includes a one-year membership to The Textile Museum) \$20 per person for optional Saturday lunch

Drawing inspiration from the exhibition Navajo Blankets of the 19th Century, this symposium offers a unique opportunity to explore the powerful aesthetics and significant trends in historic Navajo weaving. At the heart of the symposium is a day-long program of lectures presented by leading scholars and experts in the field. As part of the symposium, participants will tour the NMAI's Cultural Resources Center and have a rare opportunity to view some of the Southwestern textiles illustrated in the forthcoming book Blanket Weaving in the Southwest by the late Joe Ben Wheat, edited by Ann Lane Hedlund. Presented in connection with Navajo Blankets of the 19th Century: Selections from The Textile Museum Collections on view Sept. 5, 2003, to March 14, 2004, at The Textile Museum. Co-sponsored by The Textile Museum, the Gloria F. Ross Center for Tapestry Studies, and the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution.

For more information or to register, call (202) 667-0441, ext. 64, or visit www.textilemuseum.org/symposium.

FILM & VIDEO

AT THE MOVIES

The annual series of New York premieres and cinema classics celebrates the work of Native Americans in the movies - directors, actors, writers, and community activists. Reservations recommended. Call (212) 514-3737 or e-mail at fvc@si.edu.

HEART OF LIGHT

July 31, 6 - 8 p.m. Aug. 2, 2 - 4 p.m. Auditorium (1998, 92 min. 35 mm.) Greenland/Denmark/Norway/Sweden. In Danish and Inuit with English subtitles. Jacob Gronlykke. Music written and performed by Rasmus Lyberth (Inughuit). A search into the heart of an Inughuit man whose family is being torn apart by alcohol, violence, and tragedy. In this realistic tale, a grieving father journeys into the interior on a dangerous hunting trip that gradually becomes an odyssey into a mystical world, guided by the Qivittoq, where Rasmus may find the strength he needs by reconnecting with his lost traditions and his own memories.

At the Movies is made possible with public funds from the New York Department of Cultural Affairs and the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, and with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Thanks to Library of Congress, Tribeca Film Festival, Deitch Projects, and the Native Cinema Showcase in Santa Fe.

STORIES FROM THE GREAT PLAINS

Through Sept. 21

Daily at 1 p.m., repeated on Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. Viewing Room, second floor at State Street Corridor

Aug. 11 - Sept. 1

HAND GAME (1999, 60 min.). United States. Lawrence Johnson. A journey across the northwestern United States to eight Indian communities looks at the world of traditional gaming and the gambling game called "bone, grass, stick, or hand game."

Sept. 2 - 21

AMERICAN COWBOYS (1998, 26 min.). United States. Tania Wildbill and Cedric Wildbill (Umatilla). A documentary about the legendary rodeo careers in the early 1900s of the first Native rodeo star, Jackson Sundown (Flathead/Nez Perce), and of George Fletcher, an African-American man who grew up on the Umatilla Reservation. Repeated daily at 1:45 p.m.

WOVEN IN A BASKET Sept. 22 - Nov. 30

Daily at 1 p.m., repeated Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. Viewing Room, second floor at State Street Corridor

Sept. 22 - Oct. 13 POMO BASKETWEAVERS: A TRIBUTE TO THREE ELDERS (1994 -1995, 59 min.). David Ludwig. Profiles of three remarkable Pomo artists: Laura Somersal, Elsie Allen, and Mabel McKay. FROM THE ROOTS (1996, 28 min.). Sara Greensfelder for the California Indian Basket Weavers Association. Native California weavers discuss their art and environmental issues.

Oct. 14 - Nov. 2

...AND WOMAN WOVE IT IN A BASKET... (1989, 70 min.). United States. Bushra Azzouz, Marlene Farnum, and Nettie Kuneki (Klickitat). An exploration of the cedar-bark basketry of Nettie Jackson Kuneki illuminates Klickitat tradition, myth, and history.

ESPECIALLY FOR KIDS

Daily at 11 a.m. and noon Video Viewing Room, second floor at State Street Corridor

Aug. 11 - Sept. 1

WE'LL STILL BE DANCING (1992, 3 min.). United States. Dan Jones (Ponca). Shown with permission of Sesame Street. Children of the Ponca tribe of Oklahoma prepare to dance at a tribal gathering.

HOLY DOG (1999, 9 min.). Canada. Judith Norris (Cree). A Native woman pays tribute to the Horse Nation and her own beloved horse through poetry, song, and video.

LADY MOON (1995, 7 min.). United States. Alfreda Beartrack (Lower Brule Sioux). Drawings by the videomaker and artists tell the story of how the moon was created.

ADDRESS:

National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institution, George Gustav Heye Center One Bowling Green, New York, NY 10004

MUSEUM SHOPS:

For special-occasion shopping, jewelry by Native artists, books, and children's gifts are available in the Museum shops located on the gallery and ground floor. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information, call 212-514-3767.

WEB SITE:

Have you visited the NMAI Web sites? http://www.AmericanIndian.si.edu http://www.conexus.si.edu THE BUFFALO HUNT (1987, 30 min.). United States. Produced by the Nebraska ETV Network. This episode from a series dramatizing Omaha Indian life in1800 focuses on the experiences of the community's children.

BEAR DANCE (1988, 13 min.). United States. James Ciletti. A look at the experience of young people who are participating in the festive annual Bear Dance of the Southern Utes of Colorado.

Sept. 2 - 21

WOMEN AND MEN ARE GOOD DANCERS (1994, 6 min.). United States. Arlene Bowman (Navajo). In an experimental video that focuses on the movement of dance, young men, women, and children perform several traditional dance styles.

HOLY DOG (1999, 9 min.). Canada. Judith Norris (Cree). A

Canada. Judith Norris (Cree). A Native woman pays tribute to the Horse Nation and her own beloved horse through poetry, song, and video.

THE TURNING OF THE CHILD

(1987, 30 min.). United States. Produced by the Nebraska ETV Network. A dramatization of Omaha Indian life in 1800 focuses on the experiences of Ni^obthaska, a 13-yearold boy, and the rites of passage in his journey to manhood.

IRON NATION (1997, 12 min.). United States. Alfred Beartrack (Lower Brule Sioux). A tribute to Solomon Iron Nation (1814 -1894), a head chief of the Lower Brule band of Sioux during a difficult time of change

WE'LL STILL BE DANCING (1992, 3 min.). United States. Dan Jones (Ponca). Shown with permission of Sesame Street. Children of the Ponca tribe of Oklahoma prepare to dance at a tribal gathering.

Sept. 22 - Oct. 13

BEAR DANCE (1988, 13 min.). United States. James Ciletti. Young Southern Utes of Colorado participate in a festive Bear Dance.

TOTEM TALK (1997, 22 min.). Canada. Annie Frazier-Henry (Sioux/Blackfoot/French). Clan totems teach urban kids the importance of Northwest Coast heritage.

Oct. 14 - Nov. 2

HAUDENOSAUNEE: WAY OF THE LONGHOUSE (1982, 13 min.). United States. Robert Stiles. A look at the philosophy and life of the Six Nations Iroquois, focusing on the Mohawk.

MUSIC AND DANCE OF THE

SENECAS (1980, 11 min.). United States. Seneca Nation of Indians with the New York State Education Department. Seneca educator Midge Dean shows kids how Seneca musical instruments are used, then takes them to hear a group of singers and

learn a Seneca social dance.

ALICE ELLIOTT (1975, 11 min.). United States. Richard Lair. The famed Pomo basketmaker, born in 1886, talks of her life as a weaver.

NATIVE CINEMA SHOWCASE IN SANTA FE

Aug. 20 - 24, 2003

The third annual showcase of Native cinema in Santa Fe - presented during Indian Market by NMAI in cooperation with Taos Talking Pictures, Center for Contemporary Arts, and the Institute for American Indian Arts - focuses on new feature films and documentaries, cinema classics with live music, and films by and about Native visual artists. Works will be presented by the filmmakers. Other events include an art exhibition, live broadcasts from Native America Calling, and an evening of music and comedy performances.

For screening schedule and information, visit www.nativenetworks.si.edu and click on "What's New."



LOCATION: The NMAI Heye Center is located at One Bowling Green in lower Manhattan. Subway: 4 & 5 to Bowling Green or N & R to Whitehall Street. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day, except December 25. Thursdays to 8 p.m., made possible by grants from the Booth Ferris Foundation. Admission to the Museum and all public programs is free. To become an NMAI Charter Member, call 1-800-242-NMAI (6624).

The George Gustav Heye Center is located at One Bowling Green, New York, N.Y., and is open daily, except December 25, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., and, through the generosity of the Booth Ferris Foundation, Thursdays until 8 p.m. Admission is free. All programs are subject to change. For membership information, call (800) 242-NMAI. For program updates, call (212) 514-3888. Produced by NMAI, One Bowling Green, New York, N.Y. Rachahd Garguilo, Calendar Editor.

Artist, Teacher... and Oscar Winner In 1982, acclaimed singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie made history by becoming the first known Native American to win an Academy Award

By Jason Ryle

mid the glitz and glamour of the Academy Awards in the heart of Hollywood stood Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree). The year was 1982 and the acclaimed singer, songwriter, political activist, teacher, philosopher, artist, and occasional actor attended the ceremonies as one of the few Native American nominees in the acad-

emy's history. By the evening's end, Sainte-Marie had become its first known Native Oscar winner.

Awarded for composing "Up Where We Belong," the song from An Officer and a Gentleman, starring Richard Gere, Debra Winger, and Lou Gossett Jr., Sainte-Marie was recognized alongside co-writers Jack Nitzsche and Will Jenning in the Best Original Song category. Performed by Joe Cocker and Jennifer Warnes, the song was a number-one hit in 1982.

Was a number-one nit in 1982. Born on a Cree Reservation in Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan, Sainte-Marie was adopted by non-Native parents and raised in Maine and Massachusetts. It was during her college years in the 1960s at the University of Massachusetts, while completing a Ph.D. in Fine Art, that she began her career as a songwriter. Her road to the Oscar win was not

unexpected; many of her songs were recorded or performed by some of the music industry's biggest stars, including Barbra Streisand, Elvis Presley, Janis Joplin, and Neil Diamond.

With a total of 17 albums to her credit, Sainte-Marie is more than a singer-songwriter. She temporarily left the music industry in 1976 to raise her child and concentrate on her art. During this time, she and her son Dakota Starblanket Wolfchild (Cree) appeared on *Sesame Street* for five years and taught children about Native American history and perspectives.

Teaching has been an important facet of

Sainte-Marie's life. An educator before she became famous as a singer, she continues to do occasional lectures on topics such as songwriting, Native American studies, and philosophy. She devotes much of her time to the Nihewan Foundation, a private, nonprofit foundation she established that is dedicated to improving the education of and about Native American people and cultures. Its Cradleboard Teaching Project, serving children and teachers in 18



In 1982, Buffy Sainte-Marie was recognized alongside co-writers Jack Nitzsche (left) and Will Jenning in the Best Original Song category.

states, allows Sainte-Marie to employ her multimedia skills and experience to create core curricula based in Native American cultural perspectives.

"In the '60s, I combined my teacher's degree with my leftover singing money and founded the Nihewan Foundation, through which I gave scholarships anonymously to students," Sainte-Marie says. "I have won one of the greatest awards in the entertainment industry – the Academy Award's coveted Oscar. But it is not the greatest honor I have received. That honor was reserved for the occasion when I learned that two recipients of my little Nihewan Foundation had gone on to become presidents of tribal colleges. They make me so proud to be a teacher."

Around the time of her Oscar win, Sainte-Marie bought her first computer, which has significantly expanded her creativity. One of the pioneers of digitally produced and enhanced art, she produces works featuring a blend of traditional Native imagery modified with computer technology, a process she likens to "painting with light."

> Only two others - like Sainte-Marie, both Native Canadian - have been nominated for an Academy Award in a major category, albeit in supporting roles. Chief Dan George (Salish) was the first known Native to be nominated for an Oscar, for his performance in Little Big Man in 1970, that film's only nomination. It was not until 1990 that another Native actor repeated George's achievement. Graham Greene (Oneida) received Best a Supporting Actor nod for his role in Dances with Wolves, one of the few Hollywood pictures to prominently feature Native Americans.

> In 2000, the Screen Actors Guild – of which every professional actor in the United States must be a member – conducted a study of the television industry. It revealed that Native American talent received just 0.3 percent of all roles cast. Of this percentage, only 15 male roles and two female roles were leads, out of 20,342 roles cast in television that

year. Whites led with 15,737 lead roles, followed by African Americans with 3,086 roles.

However bleak the statistics may appear, Sainte-Marie proves that talent can triumph. As encouragement to all artists, Native or not, she states: "You have to leave room in life to dream."

For more information about Buffy Sainte-Marie, her art, and her projects, visit www.creative-native.com. Jason Ryle (Anishinabe) is a freelance writer and board member of the imagineNATIVE Film & Media Arts Festival in Toronto, Ont. Stecaina My Family's Powerful Link to the Historic Battle at Little Bighorn

Above: Monuments to fallen officers of General George Custer's Seventh Cavalry at the site of the battle of Little Bighorn. Inset: Richard Peterson's great-grandmother, Skecana.

By Richard Peterson

Imost every year I make a trek to the Little Bighorn Battlefield in southeastern Montana, a five-hour drive from my home on the Fort Peck Reservation. Tall grass and sagebrush surround the small white monuments that mark the spots where Gen. George Custer's Seventh Cavalry officers fell. It was only a few years ago, when the construction of the National Park Service's Indian monument at Little Bighorn began, that I learned my great-grandmother was at the battle on June 25, 1876.

Dakota Chief Medicine Bear and a Lakota mother, Her Bad Cane, called their daughter Skecana. My uncle, Bill Youngman, 84, describes her as a tall woman who usually wore a scarf around her head. She raised my Grandfather Lewis and Uncle Bill in the Poplar, Mont., area and passed on many stories to them, including her memories of the Little Bighorn.

In black-and-white photos of her, she wears ribbon dresses with a dentalium shell cape and a calf-length breastplate, her hair neatly braided. Uncle Bill and Aunt Velma Youngman Keever remember her as a strong woman with a generous heart. She was known for working hard to raise her children. After I learned about her experience at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, I understood where her toughness came from.

Skecana was camped with her family on the Little Bighorn River, just a few miles from where the battle occurred. Only about seven years old, she worked hard with others the day before the battle to prepare the site where thousands of Indians camped. The men got ready for battle. Others arranged the camp to look like it was filled with activity. Just before the battle, the dogs were tied to the tipis so they wouldn't follow their owners into their hiding places. The women and children hid in the bushes near the river. Skecana told Uncle Bill it was a scary time.

They came out of the brush only after they were assured that the Seventh Cavalry was defeated. After the battle, the camp packed up and left the area, knowing that more U.S. soldiers would be on their way. Many band members fled to Canada to escape persecution. Eventually some returned and settled at places like the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana and various other Sioux reservations in North and South Dakota.

Skecana died in the mid-1940s when she was about 83 or 84. She never returned to the battle site. I still have a hard time imagining what a battle must have been like for a sevenyear-old girl.

My great-grandmother lived out her life on the Fort Peck Reservation, where she raised her children and some of her grandchildren in a cabin outside of Poplar. She became deaf over the years but her strength never wavered. She's buried in the Box Elder cemetery west of town, where her grave is marked with a large stone.

Her story may seem small in comparison to the many warriors' accounts of the battle, written about in hundreds of books and the subject of numerous documentaries. But she told the story from the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho side of the battle. The new monument not only symbolizes the Indian victory over the cavalry but also gives recognition to the men, women, and children who were at the battle and did what they could to preserve their way of life.

Richard Peterson is a member of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux (Hunkpapa, Yanktonai, Sisseton) Tribes and resides in Poplar, Mont., where he works as a freelance journalist.





Collector's Edition Pendleton Blanket

To commemorate the opening of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., on September 21, 2004, we proudly present the museum's first blanket in collaboration with Pendleton Woolen Mills.

Ho-Chunk artist Truman Lowe has designed this rare, collector's quality blanket to honor his mother, Sauninga, who belonged to the tribe's Bear Clan. Her traditional ribbonwork was the inspiration for its design. An internationally acclaimed sculptor and curator of contemporary art at the NMAI, Lowe's abstract works in wood and metal draw inspiration from his ancestral culture and landscape.

This extraordinary collectors' edition blanket showcases the talent of one of our nation's Native artists while continuing the legacy of Indian blankets in America. This beautiful blanket is now available to members for just \$299, which includes shipping and handling. A portion of the proceeds will go toward educational programs at the museum. Each blanket is numbered and signed by the artist and by the Director of the National Museum of the American Indian, W. Richard West.

To order, call1-800-242-6624 or visit AmericanIndian.si.edu



Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian





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